

# THE CHURCH OF WHOSE CHOICE? (1)

By Keith Greer

One can surf through the television programs on any given day, and more than likely, you'll see several television evangelists exhorting their audiences to accept Jesus as their personal Savior and then **join the church of their choice**. In our country, which has hundreds and hundreds of so-called churches, people have a wide variety from which to choose. The panorama of differing denominational bodies, with varying doctrines, makes such offers very difficult for those who are trying to choose. Sadly, they often forget the number-one consideration – will God be pleased with the choice? Popularity and acceptance by the world does not mean God will go along for the ride!

According to the Bible, the majority often makes the wrong decision {Matthew 7:13,14}.

Let's have a sober discussion about the question: "**What church would the Lord want me to choose?**" After all, He died for the church {Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:23-25}, and He is its head {Ephesians 1:22,23}. Shouldn't He have a voice in the matter? What are the differences between the denominations begun by men and the Lord's church? First, let us consider the denominations:

**Morality.** "A devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always." {Acts 10:2} Morality is important, and most churches teach that it is important, but being a Christian takes more than just living a good moral life.

**Sincerity.** "Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." {Acts 26:9} Sincerity is important, but a person can be sincerely wrong. Paul learned this lesson.

**Conscientious.** "Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, 'Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.'" {Acts 23:1} We need to conduct ourselves honestly. Paul is an example of one who was conscientious, but honestly mistaken.

**Benevolence.** "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing." {1 Corinthians 13:3} We can do many benevolent works, but if our motives are improper, or we have no Bible authority, our works are in vain.

**Ignorance.** "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God." {Romans 10:3} People can be ignorant of God's ways, but God has left a book – the Bible – that contains all His rules.

**Hearers only.** "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." {James 1:22} Many people have heard God's word, read some of it, and understand its meaning; but this, too, is useless if they do not properly apply what they have read and heard.

**Choose your own Church.** "But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch." {Matthew 15:13,14} This shows that our choices are not acceptable to God if the church we choose are based on the different aspects considered by men.

Don't you see that the choice of a church is a very serious choice, and we must be certain the church we choose has God's – not man's – approval {Matthew 15:8,9} One cannot look into men's hearts to understand the reasons for their choices or what they believe about them. Our only concern should be choosing a church approved by God in His word. If we are seeking to please God, and not ourselves, we will look for the church of HIS choice. Sadly, many have been misled that "choosing a church" is no different than choosing the make of car one buys. Chevy, Ford, Honda, Buick, etc. – they are all the same. One can choose a car but the choice of a church – that is a different matter. Keep reading.

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